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ABSTRACT

Two interventions of a university-based organizational development (OD) team with the administrators of a local Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) are described. The intervention was invited by the new superintendent of the BOCES. The first intervention focused on skill development and goal clarification. Because of a crisis in the BOCES that occurred after the first intervention, the OD team was invited back. The second intervention emphasized renewing the skills learned in the first and then focused on interpersonal issues. Eventually, after the second intervention, the superintendent of the BOCES resigned. This consequence raises questions about the success of the interventions. Two implications are explored. The first has to do with evaluation-related issues and focuses on the relationships between OD efforts and organizational change. The second deals with the way OD projects, by their very nature, tend to shift in emphasis over time and in directions that are less process skill-oriented and more intergroup-, interperson-, and intrapersonal-oriented.
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SOFT (PERCEPTUAL) AND HARD (OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS) OUTCOMES OF AN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORT IN AN INTERMEDIATE EDUCATIONAL UNIT

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with the assistance of Sister Dorothy Smith

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for presentation at

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San Francisco, California

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Between February of 1975 and January of 1976 an organizational development (OD) effort was conducted by a team from the State University of New York at Buffalo with the administrators from a local Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Some results of that effort could have been fairly well predicted, but others could not have been so easily foreseen. This paper will describe the project and attempt to establish outcomes. The "outcomes" are the intended and unintended attitudinal and behavioral changes on the part of the BOCES organization and on the part of individuals who comprise the administrative core of that organization. Major issues to which we had to respond and the ramifications they may have for other organizational development efforts will also be explored. Of central interest here is the incredible difficulty of attempting to accurately establish relationships between OD efforts and identifiable changes. Also of interest is the tendency of OD projects over time to expand in purposes and to become increasingly and intensely focused upon interpersonal relations.

THE SETTING

To establish laboratory settings for its instructional program, the Department of Educational Administration at the University offers assistance to educational systems that are able to identify organizational problems that might be ameliorated with OD approaches. Projects, which include intensive diagnostic and intervention activities, have varied in duration from several months to two or more years, depending upon the needs

identified and the interest of the cooperating school setting in continuing the effort.*

One recent project involved an intermediate school system. This organization is but one of the more than forty BOCES districts that have been created in New York State since 1948. Like its counterparts, this BOCES provides a variety of services that local school systems cannot efficiently or financially provide for themselves. There are many such services, including planning (e.g., administering surveys and doing research to establish needs for cooperative services); conducting vocational and technical education classes; organizing and conducting special education classes for physically handicapped, mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed children; providing instructional films; and coordinating educational T.V. in local schools. School districts join together voluntarily to receive BOCES services on a contractual basis. Once they have joined a BOCES, school districts cannot choose to withdraw from the cooperative arrangement. They can opt to maintain only a minimal connection, paying their share of administrative costs but refusing to finance or cooperate with BOCES sponsored programs. Thus, BOCES expand or contract in personnel and facilities depending upon the extent to which districts view their services as desirable. They cannot grow merely because of connections at the state capital; rather, they prosper to the extent that they offer meaningful educational services and aggressively

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*Thus far, cooperative efforts of a year or more in duration have included two parochial high school faculties, a high school student senate, a district-wide administrative team, the BOCES administrative staff described in this paper, and the professional staff of a rural school district. Shorter efforts have also been carried out in diverse public and private school settings.

seek ever-broadening support from member school districts.

The BOCES of particular interest here was established in the 1950's to serve the needs of a predominately rural population. Covering a large geographical area with a relatively small school-aged population, this BOCES could be typed as steady-state in orientation. That is, basic needs were identified and the organization continued to serve these needs over time. Until several years ago, leadership was invested in the hands of the man who was first appointed to the position of district superintendent. Most of his eight administrators, all but one of whom are still with BOCES, were also hired in the early days of the organization.

As long as the composition of the constituent districts did not change continuity in leadership, personnel and program orientation was appropriate. However, by 1970, population from the nearby metropolitan area was clearly overflowing into the district. BOCES now found itself serving both large and growing suburban school districts and small and static rural school districts.

In 1973 substantial shifts began to occur in the BOCES staffing pattern. The encumbent superintendent reached retirement age and decided to submit his resignation. In addition, two new program administrators were added to the organization. After an interim period of a year, the BOCES board of education selected as its new superintendent one of the member district's chief school officers. This man was widely known for his interest in educational innovations and for his skill in operationalizing those innovations which he felt would be beneficial in his school district. As part of his agreement with the BOCES board, the new Superintendent filled a vacant assistant superintendent position with a man who had been working for him as an administrative intern in

his school district's central office.

After several months in his post it became apparent to the new superintendent that there were three primary groups that would require considerable attention if he expected the BOCES to be able to meet the needs of a changing population. First, there were the member districts' superintendents who, he felt, should play a major role in advising the BOCES about the types of services it should offer. To facilitate this advisement role he regularized district superintendents' meetings on a monthly basis. This provided opportunities for two-way information sharing and program guidance.

The second group that received the superintendent's attention was the BOCES board of education. Because he wanted the board to become more active in overall governance of the system he increased the number of formal board meetings and, whenever appropriate, included informational sessions on its meeting agendas. Unfortunately, this effort has not been very successful. The board has indeed become more actively involved, but in ways that have proven to be detrimental. For example, some board members have interfered with program management and have even sought, eventually with success, to oust the newer staff members and to force the BOCES superintendent and his hand-picked assistant superintendent to resign. Although the problems associated with the board were never directly confronted in the OD effort, they obviously played a large contextual role; severely limiting the BOCES administrators' sense of job and program security, and thus limiting their ability to respond adequately to the new administrative leadership and the district's population shifts.

The final group that the superintendent had to deal with was his own

administrative staff. From the outset his goals for the staff included: 1) clarification and updating of BOCES educational goals; 2) coordination of established goals across programs; 3) institution of long-range planning; and 4) promotion of team decision making. After several months on the job he concluded that staff members required substantial in-service work to be able to meet these expectations. Therefore, he encouraged them to attend appropriate workshops that might be offered on relevant topics, commissioned a study to establish the planning needs of BOCES, and instituted an internally-operated management-by-objectives program. Finally, in an effort to improve the staff's ability to carry out tasks in a changing environment he contacted the author of this paper and it was agreed that a team of professors and students from the University's Department of Educational Administration, who had previous experience with OD, would initiate an OD effort for the BOCES administrators.

INITIAL INTERVENTION

Diagnosis

On the basis of what was discerned during the entry period, the OD team designed an interview instrument focusing on goals, policy, problem solving, decision making, communication, change and interpersonal relations. All members of the BOCES administrative staff were interviewed. The essence of the responses is summarized below:

Goals and Policy	There is a set of written goals, most BOCES staff members agree, but no policy handbook. (Over time, a set of written goals was located, but these goals had been drawn up before many of the present staff were hired.)
Communications	There are communication problems, the focus of which is between BOCES central administration and the BOCES principals.

Problem Solving & Decision Making	Half of those interviewed saw decisions made at all levels. The rest noted that decisions were made at a level above them.
Change	New leadership and a new budget emerged as the two most important changes. Staff members saw themselves as willing to accept reasonable change; the superintendent viewed the staff as change resistant.
Interpersonal Relationships	Two distinct perceptual groups were identified: one saw the level of interpersonal trust as adequate, the other saw it as low.

Some further observations made by OD team members include: staff members seemed to be primarily concerned with their own areas and did not have an all-pervading common concern for the total BOCES program; there was some evidence of resistance to change (e.g., BOCES principals were frustrated with the new budget process); and there were strong indications that the superintendent played a dominant role in establishing and directing administrative processes. A number of staff members voiced concern over a lack of clear organizational directions and felt that they did not function effectively as a team.

During April, a demonstration workshop was held at BOCES.* The purpose was twofold: to continue the diagnostic process already begun and to prepare for the May workshop. Participation and cooperation in workshop events were high. Critical BOCES issues at this time were seen as (1) communication within the BOCES staff and between the BOCES field-based administrators and the central office staff, (2) the need to develop general goals and directives, (3) the building up of teams and increasing

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*Two simulations were used: "Towers", and a pyramiding exercise which addressed issues and concerns about the coming OD workshop and focused on further specification of critical BOCES issues.

trust, and (4) broadening the participation base for policy making.

Workshop

With this on-site experience and the resulting data in hand, the actual intervention workshop was developed with BOCES. Figure 1 shows the experiences in which the BOCES staff participated, the purpose of the experiences, the relationship of the events to the diagnostic process and the patterns of communication and behavior observed during the sessions.

Figure 1
Workshop Schedule - Events and Observations

TIME	EVENT	PURPOSE	RELATION TO DIAGNOSIS	OBSERVED COMMUNICATION AND BEHAVIOR PATTERNS
DAY 1 AM	Triads	Develop awareness of skills needed for effective communication	Communication cited as a critical problem	High degree of shared feelings
DAY 1 AM	Planners and Operators	Become aware of the dynamics of planning	Planning cited as a problem area	Giving and asking patterns quite balanced
DAY 1 PM	Five Square	Analyze aspects of cooperation and competition; development of self awareness	Felt needs in these areas	Taking over of task by most skilled participants
DAY 1 PM	Norms Clarification	Skill development for these processes	Perception gaps in group norms	Shared feeling behavior reduced; confrontation behavior began to appear
DAY 1 PM	Tinker Toy	Clarify group and individual perceptions of organizational decision making	Perceptual dichotomies of "how things get done"	Communication skills used by all
DAY 2 AM	Role Clarification	Role specification & information sharing	Encumbents confusion over their functions	Some did not participate verbally at this point
DAY 2 AM	Clarification of goals	Generate discussion to facilitate goal setting	Goal setting given as major concern	Superintendent did not participate verbally at this point
Day 2 PM	Problems, Concerns and Commitments	Focus on three of the most pressing issues along with actions to follow workshop	Need for "battle plans" given as a major concern	An increase of confronting behavior

A study of the column "Observed Communication and Behavior Patterns" shows that, as the workshop moved from day one, session one, to the last session of day two, observers saw less and less shared feelings behavior and more and more confronting behavior. This behavior change later became critical and will be explored further in the paper.

During the course of the workshop, participants were asked to evaluate each session. At the end of the second day they were asked to evaluate the over-all workshop. The following figures summarize the responses that were given to the various evaluation probes. (All workshop participants responded.)

Figure II
Reactions to Individual Events

TIME	EVENTS	RATING*
DAY 1 AM	Communication Skills Planners and Operators	87.2% *
DAY 1 PM	Five Square Norms Clarification Tinker Toy	74.5
DAY 2 AM	Role Clarification Clarification of Goals	83.4
DAY 2 PM	Problems, Concerns, Commitments	88.9
	Events Average	83.5

*Reactions were rated on a scale of 0-100% helpful for accomplishing the purposes of the events (see Figure I for Purposes)

Figure III
Reactions to Total Workshop

QUESTION	RATINGS* 1	2	3	4
1. How much has the workshop changed your perception and understanding of communications processes?	50%	50%	-	-
2. How well do you feel your colleagues worked to make the workshop experience a success?	42	58	-	-
3. How well do you feel your problem solving skills were improved?	25	75	-	-
4. How well do you feel your decision making skills were improved?	8	84	3	-
5. How much has this workshop experience given you more self confidence in your working relationships?	50	50	-	-
6. Do you now have a better understanding of the goals of BOCES?	17	75	8	-

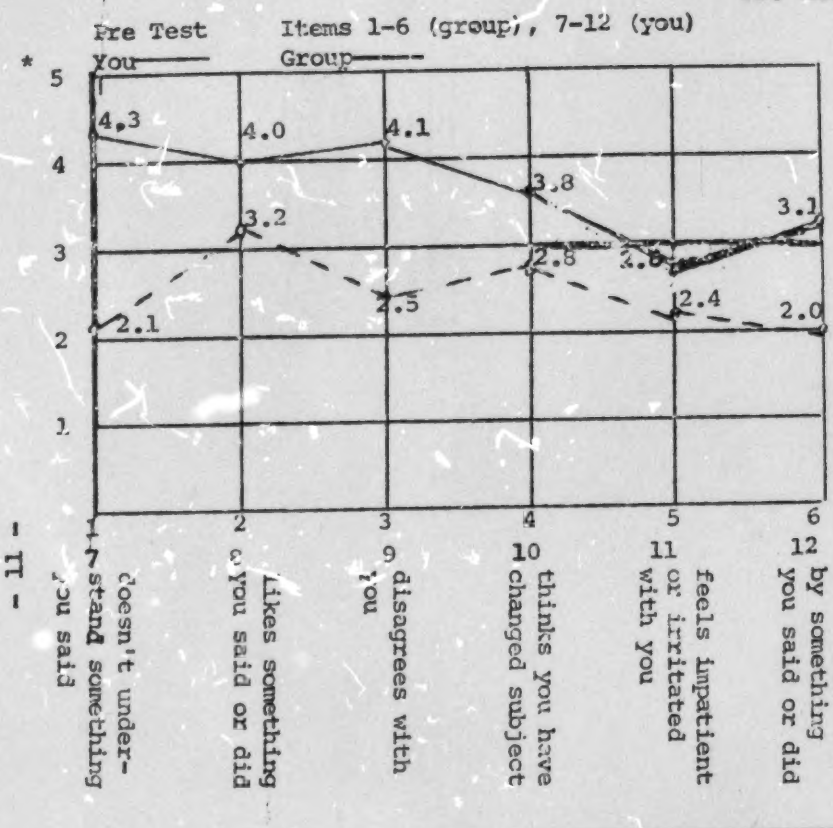
*Reactions were rated on a scale of 1-4 with 1 the top rating. The % refers to those who chose a given rating.

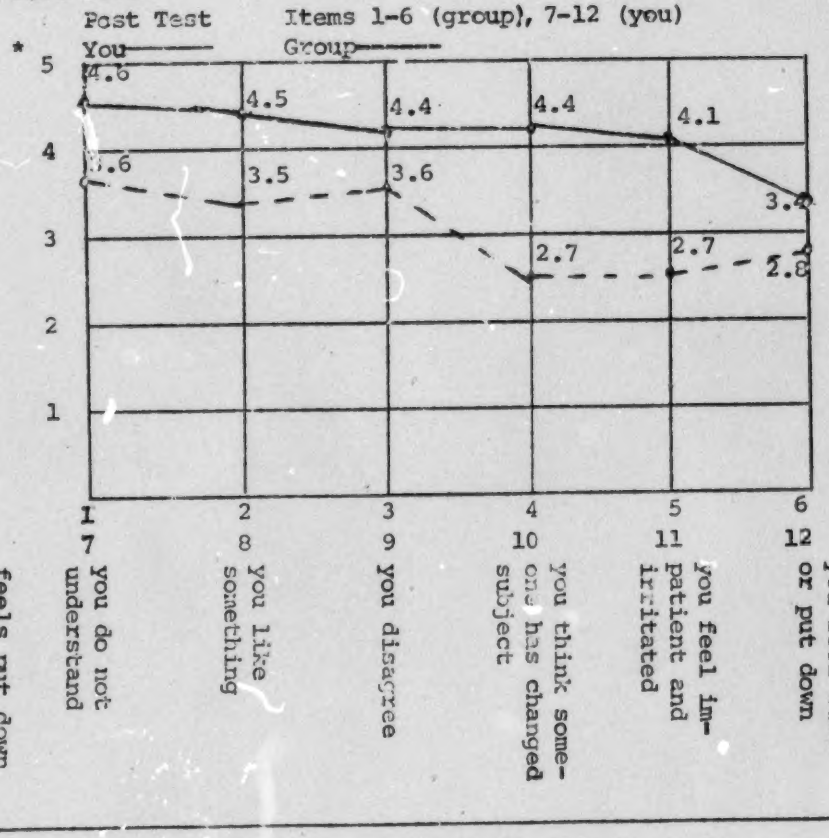
As seen from the ratings, the participants' evaluation of the workshop was positive, though Day 1 PM ratings took a dip, possibly because of crowding (there were three sessions instead of two during that time period). The overall reactions give some food for thought. Since problem solving and decision making were not the focus of specific sessions, but rather pervaded the entire workshop process, having been exposed to these processes might not have been as evident to participants as was exposure to more direct skill training in communication. However, a "better understanding of goals" was a major concern from the beginning of the diagnostic process to the end of the intervention workshop, so the fact

that one of the lowest ratings was given to "a better understanding of goals" may be important. It may be a signal telling us that the workshop was a start, but that one of the major concerns of participants when the workshop started was still a concern when the workshop closed. BOCES members' views as seen through written comments on the evaluation sheets were of unanimous agreement that a closer relationship existed among themselves because of the OD experience.

A study of the data gathered from the Group Expectation Survey instrument used before and after the intervention provides some insights into what kinds of perception changes took place during the intervention. When used with groups the survey typically reveals the following patterns: (1) each group member says that he is receptive to interpersonal feedback but that he perceives others as unwilling to give it and (2) each person says that though he would report his feelings candidly, he doubts that others would do the same. The pre and post-tests (Figure IV) show the normally expected growth towards giving and receiving feedback after having participated in the workshop. Also, items 13-24 show a significant growth pattern in the affective domain, an area of higher risk than that of earlier survey items. Individual members' expectations increased at a much higher rate than did members' perceptions of the openness of the group. As a result, the gap between how individuals perceived themselves regarding shared feelings (items 5 and 11 on the chart) and what they expected from the group actually increased, instead of decreased as might have been expected. Perhaps a majority of individual members saw themselves as more open, but were still quite unsure as to whether everyone else, i.e., the "group", was moving in the same direction. The findings

Figure IV*
Items 1-12 of Group Expectations Survey
Pre and Post-Test



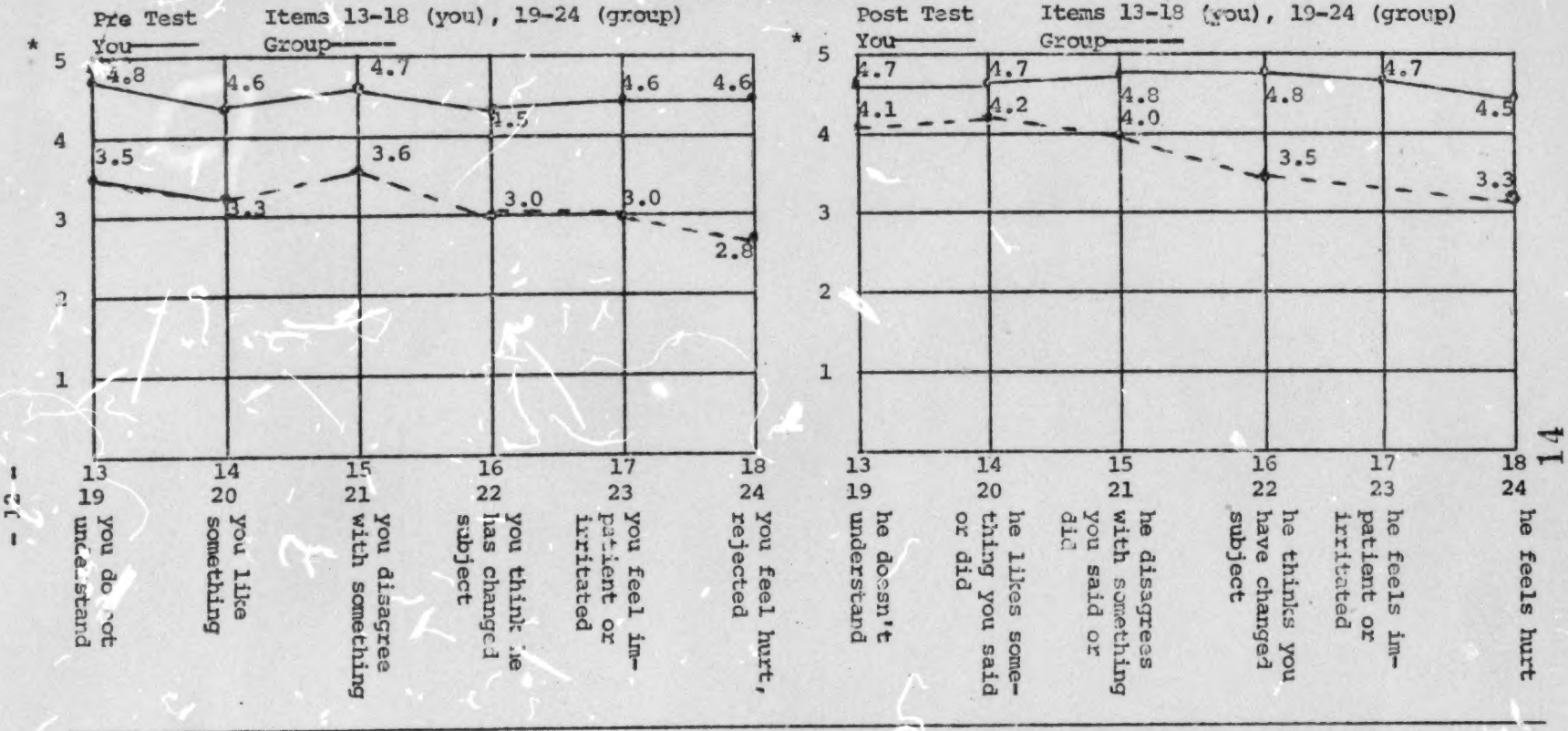


Question for items 1-6: "How many members of this group do you expect will candidly report the following information during future group sessions?"

Question for items 7-12: "With respect to how many members will you candidly report the following information during future sessions?"

*Rating Scale:
5 = any member of this group
4 = any one except one or two members
3 = a slight majority
2 = less than half of the members
1 = one or two members
0 = none of this group

Figure IV (Continued)
Items 13-24 of Group Expectations Survey
Pre and Post-Test



Question for items 13-18: "In your opinion, how many in this group are interested in knowing..."

Question for items 19-24: "From how many members of this group are you interested in knowing..."

*Rating Scale:
5 = any member of the group
4 = any except one or two members
3 = a slight majority
2 = less than half of the members
1 = one or two members
0 = none of this group

on this survey regarding shared feelings correspond to the patterns of behavior found in Figure I on page 7.

Action Plans

During the last session of the workshop, BOCES members were asked to identify their three most pressing issues and to develop some action strategies for dealing with them. Plans formulated during this session are listed below, as well as the outcomes to date.

Figure V
Action Plans and Strategies

ACTION PLANNING PRIORITIES	STRATEGIES	TARGET DATE	OUTCOMES
1. Identify, clarify and prioritize goals, gain consensus between BOCES administrators and the Board on goal statements.	1. Meetings-BOCES Board and Chief School Officers for "Program Review"	May	1. Accomplished
	2. Finalize goal statement by staff	June	2. Accomplished
	3. Seek consensus for goal statement from Chief School Officers & component districts.	Summer-Sept.	3. Accomplished Accomplished
	4. BOCES Board-confirm goal statement.	Oct.	4. Accomplished
2. Work towards open communication along with increased confidentiality.	1. June Staff meeting to set up workshop for a. identification of skill needs b. development of trust c. development of group unity	June	Workshop Held
3. Improve total organizational planning capacity.	1. MBO in-service work	July	1. Accomplished
	2. Articulation between departments to develop strategies and clarify roles	Nov.	2. Ongoing
	3. Yearly Planning Calendar	Sept.	3. Accomplished
	4. Retreats and workshops on special topics	Throughout year	Had a special meeting on budgeting

If this OD intervention was to be judged on the basis of whether or not the action plans formulated during the sessions were actively carried out, this record of accomplishment would seem to insure a high rate of success.

The overall picture of this workshop, as viewed in the evaluations of individual sessions, the evaluations of the OD work as a whole, and the overall results of the Group Expectations Survey, would indicate that the OD project had been effective. Further, movement on the action plans indicated BOCES was on the way to becoming a self-renewing organization.

INTERIM PERIOD

On July 1, 1975, the BOCES superintendent received a letter signed by seven of the BOCES administrators, stating that their primary concern was "providing quality programs and extending opportunities for the students we serve..." Further, the letter stated, despite many efforts, several issues remained unresolved. There followed a list of issues about which the signers were seeking "clarification and direction". There were nine issues listed, six of which did not seem to have been addressed in any of the statements made by BOCES participants prior to or during the workshop and three which the OD team thought had been addressed. The six new issues were:

1. Procedures for submission of program proposals, particularly those involving students, to avoid the delays which have occurred this year and insure proper priorities. (List of programs followed.)

2. Clarification of who should participate in administrative staff meetings and constituency of the administrative staff.

3. Policies regarding selection of administrative staff for attendance at conferences, number of conferences within each department, procedure for request and approval of conferences within each department.

4. Written notification of accumulated sick leave, personal leave, and vacation time for the past five years and a policy statement as to the disposition of vacation time.

5. Consideration of responsibility changes during the school year, salary statements specifying duration of commitment and consideration of adjustment of contract commitment. Development of a progressive administrative salary schedule.

6. Administrative salary adjustment to be made July 1 rather than after teacher negotiation settlements.

The issues that were related to the OD effort were:

7. Development of job descriptions and clarification of job responsibilities.

8. Development of a policy handbook.

9. Development of an organizational staff chart.

In the letter, which called for a written response by August 15, they stated their belief that the resolution of these issues would enhance the "development of a strong, unified, viable staff, able to present quality programs to students". The new issues seem to have been reflections of the economic crunch that was hitting school systems throughout the state at that time. Inclusion of issues that had been addressed at the earlier workshop, however, seem to indicate a perceptual gap between the BOCES administrators and the University team concerning movement towards a renewing organization. The letter signalled a shift in what, up to that point, had seemed to be a highly successful and seemingly predictable OD intervention. At precisely the time when the OD team's contract was completed, the BOCES staff moved into a new phase of confrontation.

A NEW CONTRACT IS ESTABLISHED

By the end of the summer it was apparent that a high level of tension existed among the BOCES administrators. The conflicts of the summer were not resolved and staff members were openly stating concerns about the BOCES' ability to meet the needs of member school districts. In fact, the superintendent told his staff informally that because of the growing intensity of the conflict he was considering resigning. At a staff meeting in August agreement was reached that further in-service work was required, especially in the areas of communications and conflict resolution. The superintendent was asked to reestablish relations with the University's OD team.

The new request was reviewed by the involved university personnel. They realized that this was a most critical juncture; the formal agreement between the University and the BOCES had come to an end so they would need to work under new ground rules. Focusing upon skill development and goal clarification the initial project had been of a relatively low risk nature. Now the focus would be upon interpersonal issues at a time of severe conflict within the administrative group (as well as with the governing board).* The initial effort could be profiled as one which progressed from skill development and a general sharing of ideas among

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*Casting a continuing shadow over the project were the negative attitudes of some members of the governing board towards the new superintendent and his program thrusts. But, as noted earlier, it was beyond the legitimate bounds of the University team to deal with this problem since the contract was with the professional staff. The board viewed itself as totally outside of the effort and resisted all efforts to be involved. This shortcoming was critical for it precluded our ability to deal with one of the major groups contributing to the problems that were being clarified.

participants to a willingness and openness to deal with confrontations which occurred towards the latter half of the project. This pattern indicates a shift from working for acceptance as individuals by the total group, as well as by the University facilitators, through a rewarding and confidence building phase when most individuals began to feel accepted, and into a third phase when individuals felt secure enough to risk confrontations that had remained latent until that time. Unfortunately, the initial contract with BOCES was concluded when this third phase was just being reached. In retrospect, we believe that a continuation of the relationship at that critical juncture may have been beneficial to the BOCES staff, helping to make the necessary transition between established and emerging norms and behaviors.

A Second Diagnosis

Recognizing that the dynamics of the situation had become so explosive, it was decided to leave responsibility for the design and implementation of the fall efforts to the two faculty members who had guided the initial OD project. The BOCES administrators agreed to attend another workshop. Prior to that event each BOCES staff member was interviewed to ascertain current estimates of their situation. The interviews, which lasted approximately 30 minutes each, centered upon identification of the major problems that were being encountered, the perceived causes, and the strengths which the group felt they could employ to overcome their problems. In addition, they were asked to clarify what they hoped would be the outcome of the workshop experience. On this last question there was considerable interest in having members of the group learn to communicate better, to "level with each other", and to "clear the air"

where conflicts were constraining their productivity.

In analyzing the results of the interviews it became clear that most group members saw the same problems. It also became obvious that they did not know that this was the case. Either they had not taken the time or else they had not been open to sharing concerns with one another. Therefore, it seemed that the most useful thing to do would be to cloister the administrative staff over a few days for an intensive and, hopefully, open exchange focusing on interpersonal and intergroup problem clarification and resolution.

Second Workshop

The overnite workshop (two-and-a-half days) was scheduled for October at a resort some fifty miles from the BOCES central office. The initial sessions were used to provide feedback to group members to show them that the communications skills (e.g., paraphrasing, perception checking and sharing of feelings) learned during the first phase of the initial workshop had quickly slipped from use when the University team relaxed its central focus on them. Happily, for the remainder of the second workshop most members conscientiously practiced these skills.

Because significant similarities in responses to interview questions were found, the group was then urged to accept ownership of the problems identified. To facilitate this objective the priority problems identified in the interviews were typed on three-by-five cards and randomly distributed among members of the group. They were asked to share their information so that the group could identify major problem themes. After extensive discussion and, in some cases, individual disclosure of authorship of statements, the group derived the following problems composite:

-- "The main problem is internal trust, 'finking and leaks'";

-- "There is ineffective communications and inadequate information flow" (up, down and across);

-- "We don't have a united front (solidarity) when we work with the board";

-- "There is a lack of confidence in central office leadership";

-- "We lack a clear and unified philosophy"

The group was then asked to abstract priority problems that should be confronted during the workshop. They decided to spend the remainder of the retreat on the priority issues of intergroup role clarification (i.e., central office and the rest of the staff) and ways of resolving conflicts between the group and the superintendent. This ended the first day's activities.

Most of the second day was given over to an imaging exercise*1, focusing upon central office personnel -- the superintendent, and the two assistant superintendents -- as one imaging group and the rest of the administrators, who soon adopted the label of "middle management", as the other group. Some selected results of the exercise are summarized here (Figure VI) to give the reader a sense of the interactions that occurred.

As expected, the exercise restrained the participants' tendencies to place blame for conflicts on others and encouraged them to focus upon their own contributions. Most of the BOCES staff group did come to recognize their personal and sub-group's contributions to their problems.

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*In an imaging exercise two groups are given a two-part assignment. Each group develops an image (description) of itself and an image of the other group based upon observed behaviors. Images, favorable and unfavorable, are recorded and shared. The sharing process is taken through several stages, usually requiring 1½ to 2 days. See footnote 1.

Figure VI
Imaging Exercise

Middle Management (MM) as Imaged by Central Office Staff (COS)

I. Individually reluctant to change.

Examples: Unwilling to accept new budget procedures
Lack of support for new programs
Reluctance to support philosophy of "mainstreaming"
Unwilling to accept unorthodox philosophy of occupational education
Lack of commitment for M.B.O. procedures

MM's Response: We will adopt new budgetary processes
We will accept M.B.O. procedures

II. Crisis oriented.

Examples: Unwilling to write 5-year plan, four years after due date!
No contingency plans for transportation program
Proposals submitted after programs should have been instituted
Lack of prior planning for programs

MM's Response: Five year plans have been submitted (even if late)
Prescribed administrative procedures should be jointly developed
We will make more efforts at long-range planning

III. Concern about COS's tasks interferes with MM's primary task of working with/for children.

Examples: Creating a "paper mill" -- apparent need for information that is not directly related to jobs
Over-involved with COS procedures
Statements of "feeling left out"

MM's Response: COS should send us information that goes to districts
Initial stages of new procedures should involve MM so we will understand our roles and responsibilities

Figure VI (Continued)
Imaging Exercise

IV. Lack of evaluation methods for particular programs.

Examples: No response to COS's evaluation instrument for special education
No built-in mechanisms for program evaluation.

MM's Response: We recognize this
Attempts are being made to overcome it
We need assistance

Central Office Staff (COS) as Imaged by Middle Management (MM)

I. COS is unconcerned with MM staff members, both personally and with their organizational goals.

Examples: COS does not respond, or responds slowly, to requests
Lack of formal evaluation process for administrative staff
Transfer of tasks away from some MM staff diminishes roles
Individual MM staff not receiving information they feel is important

COS Response: A priority COS task will be to get a formal evaluation process going
You must understand role-task assignments will continue to be modified, but we will discuss them with you before institution

II. COS is concerned with self-image and organizational image as opposed to student needs.

Examples: A top priority organizational objective is to promote BOCES image
COS action on student service program has been delayed

COS Response: We think your image and examples of behaviors reflects confusion about goals and objectives in the organization
Goal setting will continue as will goal achievement
Goals will be reviewed annually

Figure VI (Continued)
Imaging Exercise

III. COS is unresponsive to staff requests and needs (personal and programmatic).

Examples: Delays of submission of MM proposals to the board
Inattention to salary concerns of MM
No MM membership on advisory committees

COS Response: Planning and processing of proposals will be calendared and clarified, hopefully expediting the problem

IV. Ideas and actions that do not originate in the central office are minimized.

Examples: MM suggested vocational and pre-vocational programs aren't instituted
COS emphasis on own programs rather than MM preferences

COS Response: We recognize legitimacy of examples given, but selection of programs and projects will continue to depend upon their congruence with organizational goals and objectives

Most important, as the superintendent interacted with various group members throughout the exercise, it became clear that he was not "out to get" any particular individuals.

As the day progressed remarks directed at the superintendent became increasingly friendly and supportive. In addition, there were repeated requests for him to clarify his status. Specifically, the group wanted to know if he intended to resign as superintendent at the end of the 1975-76 academic year as he had indicated on several earlier occasions, or whether he was willing to make a continuing commitment as their leader.

At the end of day two the facilitators held a conference with the superintendent to clarify this issue. The upshot of the conference was that he promised to think through the request and to lead the session the next day. At that session he told the group that interpersonal and intergroup problem resolution was important and that his belief in the possibility of problem resolution had increased as a result of the workshop interactions. However, he stated that while this was necessary it would not be sufficient cause for him to change his earlier decision. In effect, he told them: "Don't tell me you are with me unless you can agree with my educational objectives." He then proceeded to verbalize about the philosophical tenets that were at the core of his educational belief system. As far as can be ascertained, this was the first time that the group had extensively explored educational values. The discussion was animated but time was running out. Therefore, an action plan to follow-up the workshop was agreed upon. Sequentially, the superintendent would put his thoughts together on paper; the group would review the document; and the total staff would reconvene in one week at one of

their homes to spend the afternoon discussing it. The specified purpose of the follow-up meeting was to clarify the group's understanding of the superintendent's educational philosophy and to discover whether it was compatible with their own educational values. The superintendent promised to give serious consideration to remaining on in his post if it became clear that there was substantial agreement. If, on the other hand, there was not agreement he emphasized that it would make sense to admit the disparities and proceed with his earlier-stated intentions of resigning.

Post-Workshop Events

As promised, the superintendent wrote his position paper and distributed it for review. In that paper he proposed that, "no youngster should 'fail' ...the concept of 'zero rejects' is an achievable goal for our educational institutions...'mainstreaming' special education students is appropriate and BOCES should help member districts to implement this concept."

He also stated his belief in a "post-industrial society" that will be noted for, "limited economic growth and change ...decentralization of most large institutions ...participatory politics ...emphasis on craft-based activities ...wealth shifts rather than constant accumulation of more material goods ...low energy tools to replace many current technologies which are destroying the planet ...simpler living styles and smaller community clusters ...emphasis on self-reliance and group reliance rather than chronic dependence on large institutions".

He concluded that he wished to spend the rest of his professional life "designing, developing and implementing those educational experiences that lead in that direction". These experiences would include

"emphasis on people loyalties ...constant search for individuality ...desire to personally make do with low energy tools ...(a) sense of mystery and awe for the natural environment and all living things ...(and a) belief in the need for human limits". Noting that since the retreat several staff members had said his philosophy was like "motherhood and apple-pie ...who could disagree?" he asked the group to consider whether their own program priorities would "lead to the fulfillment of the general statement" and, if not, "what changes are suggested."

At the follow-up meeting the facilitator encouraged members of the group to question the superintendent about aspects of his philosophy that might still be unclear to them. Next, they were urged to clarify how they felt the superintendent's statement might alter their programs. Following a lengthy and open-ended discussion each staff member was asked to write out responses to the following questions:

1. Do you generally agree with the superintendent's philosophical position and educational goals?
2. Do you agree as they affect your particular programs?
3. Does the statement present you with any special problems as you carry out your activities?

Each staff member was then encouraged to publicly share his responses. These responses are presented in Figure VII.

As Figure VII illustrates there was close to consensus agreement at the general level. However, as the members of the staff were urged to particularize the philosophy as it related to their individual assignments there were many reservations; only two of nine saw no problems for their situations. There were clearly evident differences in values and in willingness to accept risks. By the end of the meeting it had

Figure VII
Summary of Responses of BOCES Staff Members to Their
Superintendent's Philosophy and Goals Statement

Staff Member	Agreement at the General Level	Agreement as if Affects Particular Programs	Any Special Problems in Carrying out Role
A	The way I'd like to see education go	I'd roll with the punches	No qualms--little effect at all
B	Agree	Helps give me direction	No problem
C	Agree	Many, many problems in implementing this philosophy. These problems color my readiness.	Must first develop readiness. Superintendent may be fifty years ahead of himself.
D	Agree; but it's like motherhood and apple-pie	Need more clarification as to how it would be implemented.	Uncertain how it will affect programs I administer.
E	Agree	Could make my job more interesting, but how can we do it?	Maybe I don't have readiness to accept it, and I don't think the schools do either.
F	Agree	Gives me direction for my job.	It would be difficult to move others: some who are not here today.
G	Agree 99.99%	The education community is geared to the industrial society; this is a problem.	I would hesitate to commit kids to it.
H	I'm on the fence	Not adverse to experimenting.	Don't know if we can homogenize learning offerings.
I	Agree	Difficult to implement. I'll need more direction.	Licensing and specific standards makes it difficult. A difficult philosophy to embrace.

become apparent to those in attendance that there was a wide gap in expectations. However, rather than take any action at the time, the group decided to reconvene in a week to decide whether, after further thought, there might still be ways of narrowing the gaps. Not surprisingly, at that meeting the group concluded that their differences with the superintendent were significant and probably insurmountable. This conclusion was realistic, as evidenced by a set of goal statements that the group derived for their BOCES later that year. These goal statements were maintenance oriented (e.g., maintain communications with school districts; establish educational needs in the area serviced; improve the quality and efficiency of services provided; and insure the availability of adequate facilities as needed). Nowhere in this document can be found the kind of goal statements for education that are of the nature of the superintendent's estimation of a "post industrial society".

Within two weeks of the "narrowing the gap" meeting the superintendent submitted his formal resignation to the governing board to take effect at the end of the academic year. The choice of timing for submitting his resignation was triggered by a stepped-up campaign by the antagonistic faction of the board of education. However, as a result of the fall's in-service work it had already become inevitable that he would step down.

OUTCOMES

Concerning the impact of this organizational development project one might initially conclude that "the operation was a success but the patient died". However, this rather simplistic conclusion does not hold up under closer scrutiny. The short-range goals established in the first phase of the project were at least partially achieved. Group members

did come to trust each other to work together to a greater extent than was previously the case. Organizational skills were learned and the group was able to develop and agree upon a set of actions to be pursued to improve the organization's ability to carry out its tasks. At least several of the action statements were actually accomplished.

At this point, however, establishing outcomes becomes more difficult. During the summer, when much of the conflict escalation occurred, one might conclude that the events held during the spring were counterproductive because they contributed to mutinous activities. The skills learned were employed in ways that created a crisis. However, they could also have been turned towards promoting a sense of "togetherness" as easily as they were to increasing divisiveness. The skills learned did not cause the conflict. What does appear to be the case is that the skills made it possible for "middle management" to be more effective in a direction that, in all probability, had been set long before the events of the summer. From this perspective, one could say that the original contract was incomplete. It should have included more emphasis on interpersonal relations; probably at least equalling the emphasis given to process skill development. Looking back at the results of the initial interviews we can find traces of the remarks that finally surfaced in the formal correspondence of the summer. Why these concerns did not arise at the spring workshop may be at least partially explained by the tendency of groups to approach openness cautiously. But it may also be due to the fact that the initial intervention did not include sessions specifically structured to get at these issues. The lesson is clear: learning skills is not enough. People must also learn to share needs,

feelings, and hidden agendas.

It is even more difficult to make judgments about the fall activities and especially about the ultimate resignation of the superintendent. In-service work carried out at this stage was well beyond the parameters of the original contract, but it was at least partly required because of the original effort. At this stage the project was viewed by the University facilitators as salvage in nature. That is, the conflict had already erupted and now the client group was looking for ways to re-establish cooperative working relations. Since the superintendent ultimately concluded that he must resign the project might be deemed a failure.

However, this conclusion may be overly pessimistic. There are situations when it is necessary for individuals to leave organizations, both for their own and for the organization's betterment. The philosophy and educational goals of the superintendent were substantially at odds with those of his staff. He thought this was the case but his administrators did not seem to grasp this reality. They were absorbed with maintenance issues that really did not matter if they disagreed with the purposes and program preferences of their leader. By the close of the fall activities there was a clear understanding by the group that the gap existed and, more important, that it was not likely to be overcome. This understanding was necessary if the group was to survive with the morale required to continue efforts under new leadership. Without this understanding there would inevitably have been anxieties among the group's members over their individual roles in the resignation of the superintendent. When interviews are held between BOCES administrators and candidates for

the superintendency it is very probable that there will be questions that seek clarification of educational goals as well as the usual questions that explore leadership styles.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE STATE OF THE ART

The case described herein is not so idiosincratic that the implications can be dismissed as irrelevant to the future of organizational development in educational settings. My own experience over a number of years leads me to conclude that, while every effort presents unique challenges, there are similarities that cut across most OD projects. In most cases it is quite difficult to accurately identify and measure organizational change and outcomes. Still, the complexity of the issue is no excuse for not attempting to evaluate OD projects.

What are some of the larger implications that seem especially worth exploring? I think there are two in particular that were highlighted by the case: evaluation-related issues and the shifting and ever-more interpersonal levels to which OD projects tend to move. Beginning with evaluation, there are several concerns that have occupied the thinking of OD consultants who try to establish relationships between their efforts and organizational change:[2]

1. Where does the most effective balance lie between the need to gather information to assess the impact of an OD project and the need to maintain positive consultant-client relations? Insufficient data gathering may cause the consultant to design intervention strategies that are inappropriate. Too many requests for information can result in clients becoming unhappy about "excessive" intrusions on their busy work schedules. It

is most difficult to say where the balance lies, because it varies from project to project, depending upon the nature of the problem and the composition of the client group.

2. How can we even hazard a guess at cause-and-effect relationships between an OD effort and its consequences? This can only be done if we can say something about the initial status of organizations, and if we have devised indicators to show short-range impacts while projects are in effect. Evaluation should be a process that begins with the initial client contact. In this sense diagnosis is the earliest stage of evaluation. Evaluation ought to encompass base-line data and in-stream data as well as outcome data.
3. What are we evaluating? The tendency is to evaluate growth in process skills of individuals and groups. This is appropriate but probably insufficient. When we bring people together to improve their ability to make decisions or to set goals, we are, at the same time going to have an impact upon interpersonal and intergroup relations. My own experience is that skills teaching is a fairly manageable task, but it is affected by, and in turn affects, the dynamics of how individuals and groups interact with each other. If evaluations of OD efforts focus solely upon skills development, a partial, and thus inaccurate, portrait will be derived.
4. Given the dynamic interplay of organizational events, interpersonal and intergroup relations, and skill development, can we adequately evaluate OD efforts with a single type of

instrumentation? It becomes ever-more clear that evaluations must be multi-faceted. They should include a combination of approaches such as questionnaires, interviews, observations, documentation and whatever else may be appropriate for a particular setting. There is also the issue of standardized instruments vs. tailor-made instruments. In most instances it is likely that some combination of the two is appropriate. Standardized instruments lend a sense of reliability to the resultant data but they cannot possibly provide a complete and accurate picture because every OD project is unique in some way due to the setting, the problems and the people involved.

5. Can we be confident about the predictive power of our evaluations? Even if evaluations are carried out at appropriate points-in-time, are multi-faceted, and seek extensive information, their usefulness will still be severely limited because such portraits of individuals and groups cannot be accurate for more than a short time. People and groups change over time and, often, in unexpected directions.[3] We know, for example, that skills are soon forgotten unless there are purposeful and continuing efforts to secure them among group members in ways that encourage changes in norms and behavior patterns. We also know that unanticipated events, such as community crises or breakdowns in collective negotiations, can do much to abort the impact of OD efforts. This only reinforces the notion that evaluation should be viewed as a continuous effort so that we can be a bit more certain that what was viewed as a reality yesterday remains one today.

6. When is an evaluation completed? In most cases we have viewed evaluation as terminating at the point when consultants and clients part company. However, while the actual intervention is time-bound, the impact upon the organization is not. Since the pay-off lies in the organization's ability to respond to future needs, the full test of the OD effort can only be established over a period of years. Short-range and mid-range project outcomes are certainly important to ascertain, but only as indicators of probable long-range outcomes. We know that organizational change takes years; why not then evaluate outcomes over an extensive time period?

7. Finally, can we really define "success"? This is a most difficult concept to operationalize. In the present case, for example, the original contract seemed to have been fulfilled so the evaluation might indicate "success". However, the project seemed to contribute to subsequent conflicts and, eventually, to the resignation of the superintendent. In this sense, was the project a "failure"? I think not, because the resignation may well have been the most appropriate course of action for both the superintendent and for the organization. In the long run, can an organization, an OD effort, or a person for that matter, be a "success" or a "failure"? Life is as it is lived and organizations are as they are; both successes and failures occur on a continuing basis. Indicators of movement such as personal health, organizational health, self-awareness and ability to cope, are the things that we are really looking at.

We are dealing in an arena that is composed of complex human interactions, choices and values, we ought to take the "success" and "failure" glasses off and look at things as they are and for themselves.

The second issue is that of the shifting nature of OD contracts. There are many levels at which a contract can be made between an outside consultant and a client organization. These levels range from (1) Operations research or analysis and the evaluation of individual performance to (2) management by objectives, (3) instrumental process analysis, (4) the quality of human relationships and (5) intrapersonal analysis.[4] OD efforts focus on the last three of these levels. Frequently, the tendency is to initiate a contract at the least hazardous, or process analysis level. If identifiable problems can be dealt with at this level it is appropriate to keep the major emphasis here rather than to move towards the more hazardous and deeper levels of human relationships and intrapersonal analysis. However, in my experience, projects that continue for more than several months seem to move inexorably from intermediate to deeper levels of interventions. Once the initial agenda of objectives are addressed it becomes possible to confront the more risk-oriented levels that are ever-present, but which organizational members have resisted confronting prior to their initial in-service work.

OD projects, by their very nature, tend to shift in emphasis over time and in directions that are less process skill-oriented and more intergroup, interpersonal and intrapersonally oriented. This is not to say that this is inappropriate; rather it seems to be a fact of OD life. This fact must be taken into account when attempting to evaluate what

has been done. From time 1, to time 2, through time n and beyond, OD projects are likely to change in focus. OD consultants have to be able to take this phenomenon into account, modify strategies, and measure results accordingly.

In closing, I would like to comment about OD's present limitations. OD, as an approach to organizational change is still in its infancy; especially so in education. In fact, the term OD only began to creep into the literature on educational change within the past two decades and the pioneering efforts in educational settings began only during the mid-1960s. While some educators, especially university-based educators, are rallying to its banner, there is still a paucity of evidence that OD can really achieve what its gurus have promised. It is a bit frustrating to conclude that what is needed is further research. But this does appear to be the case. OD projects are being conducted in educational settings across the country but there seem to be precious few serious attempts to monitor the results of these efforts.

In this paper I have attempted to highlight some of the major evaluation-related issues that have been of concern in my own OD work. I am sure that there are other issues that will be brought out in the other papers presented at this symposium. We are at a critical juncture. Until we can respond to the issues raised OD will remain only an interesting art that some consultants and educational leaders praise and a few practice rather than the main-line strategy for changing American education that it has given promise of becoming.

FOOTNOTES

1. R.R. Blake, J.S. Mouton and R.L. Sloma, "The Union-management Intergroup Laboratory: Strategy for Resolving Intergroup Conflict", Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 6(4) 413-426, or R.A. Schmuck, P.J. Runkel, et. al., Handbook of Organization Development in Schools, National Press Books, Palo Alto, California, pp. 158-159.

2. For example, the cases described in R.A. Schmuck and M. B. Miles, Organization Development in Schools, National Press Books, Palo Alto, California, 1971, pp. 10-23.

3. Campbell and Stanley's, "equivalent time samples" evaluation designs speak to this problem, D.T. Campbell and J.C. Stanley, "Experimental Designs for Research and Teaching", Handbook of Research on Teaching, Rand McNally & Co., Chicago, 1963, pp. 171-246.

4. R. Harrison, "Choosing the Depth of Organizational Intervention", The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. 6, No. 2, 1970, pp. 181-202.